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Mrs. Zemias Shepherd.

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MRS. ZEMIA SHEPHERD.

APRIL 10, 1882.—Laid on the table and ordered to be printed.

Mr. T. M. RICE, from the Committee on Pensions submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill H. R. 4807.]

*The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 4807) for the relief of Zemias Shepherd, have had the same under consideration, and do make the following report:*

The claimant, Zemias Shepherd, is the wife of Nathan Shepherd, and resides at Fairfield, State of Iowa. She was the daughter of William Stewart, who for many years was a frontiersman and Indian spy. Evidence of the most reliable character is presented, showing that William Stewart was in the early settlement of the West and Northwestern Territories, a brave, noble, and self-sacrificing man; and while he devoted many years to the service of his country, and the protection of our advancing civilization upon the frontier, we have no evidence that he ever held any official position, or that he was ever accredited as a government agent, or made any claim for, or ever received, any government compensation. He in the mean time accumulated a small competence, and in old age settled down at home. By means of an unfortunate investment he lost all of his property. Old, infirm, and penniless, he found a home with his daughter, Mrs. Shepherd, where he was cared for until he died. Mrs. Shepherd is poor, is now also aged, infirm, and in great need; and she now asks for relief on account of the very long, very faithful, and very beneficial services of her father, performed as aforesaid without reward or compensation.

The foregoing seem to be the undoubted facts of this case.

But, it is submitted, Mrs. Shepherd is a married woman. She has a living husband, the head of her family. She was never at any time dependent upon her father for support or maintenance; on the other hand she and her husband provided for her dependent father. Second, it is not claimed that the father was ever an accredited officer, agent, or in any sense employé of the United States; he was at no time a scout or spy in the government service. Had he been, or had he at any time any claim for compensation, he would likely in his life time have made it manifest.

In conclusion, taking the most liberal views of the rules which should govern in making appropriations for meritorious and beneficent service of those who have all their lives been benefactors of the government and the people, there is no rule of law or equity that will justify the granting of the prayer in this bill. With a large degree of sympathy for Mrs. Shepherd, a sense of duty impels your committee to make an unfavorable report. All of which is respectfully submitted.

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